

[Press release: Minister Field remarks to media at the February 2018 EU Foreign Affairs Council meeting](#)

Upon arrival at the Foreign Affairs Council in Brussels, Minister of State Mark Field said:

We are obviously very interested in playing our part today in the Venezuelan situation which is a dreadful humanitarian, political and diplomatic situation. We are obviously very keen to be supporting the Spanish who are leading on this and we need to move towards a united front to ensure there is a fully participatory, free and fair election in Venezuela.

We are going to talk about the Middle East Peace Plan... I hope that we are going to have an agreement that we need to move ahead and ensure that there is a two-state solution but also above all that America has to be part and parcel of this process.

We are also going to talk a little bit about Moldova. Many of you know obviously in Moldova there is a programme of economic and political reform being supported by all elements of the European Union.

[Minister Mark Field at the FAC](#)

Further information

- Follow Foreign Office Minister Mark Field [@MarkFieldUK](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

Media enquiries

For journalists

Email
newsdesk@fco.gov.uk

Newsdesk

[News story: Secretary of State Appoints Charity Commission Chair](#)

Baroness Tina Stowell has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport as the new Chair of the Charity Commission, for three years from 26 February 2018.

Baroness Stowell will take over from William Shawcross in the role.

Matt Hancock, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, said:

Tina Stowell will be a brilliant chair of the Charity Commission and I am delighted she is taking up this role. It is an important time for the Commission, and the sector, and I know that she will work tirelessly to protect and promote the great work that charities do and ensure they uphold the highest standards of integrity. I would also like to thank William Shawcross for his hard work over the past six years.

Baroness Stowell said:

I am delighted to join the Charity Commission, and look forward to leading a strong board and a committed and expert staff through the challenges ahead. I will place the public interest at the heart of everything I do as Chair to build the public's trust in charities and the Commission as their regulator. To that end it is vital that we have a constructive, business-like relationship with all our stakeholders and I look forward to listening to a wide range of voices in the days and weeks ahead.

Baroness Stowell of Beeston was Leader of the House of Lords and the Lord Privy Seal until July 2016.

Tina Stowell was made a peer in January 2011 and joined the Government in September the same year. As a junior minister she led the landmark Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act through the House of Lords in 2013. She was promoted to Leader of the House of Lords and the Lord Privy Seal in 2014 and re-appointed to the same Cabinet post after the 2015 General Election.

Before joining the House of Lords Tina Stowell's career over the previous 25 years crisscrossed government, politics and the media. Until September 2010,

she was the BBC's Head of Corporate Affairs.

She was a civil servant for ten years, working at the Ministry of Defence in London, the British Embassy in Washington and 10 Downing Street from 1991 to 1996. She left the Civil Service at the age of 28 and was awarded the MBE in the 1996 Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Notes to editors

- This appointment has been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments
- The Chair of Charity Commission is appointed by the Secretary of State. Remuneration for this role is £62,500 for up to two and a half days per week. The term of appointment will last for three years
- In accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments, any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years must be declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation, or candidature for election. Baroness Tina Stowell has declared that she was leader of the Conservative Party in the House of Lords from 2014-2016; she has spoken on behalf of the Conservative Party and candidates during elections campaigns; and has canvassed on behalf of the Conservative during election campaigns. She has resigned the Conservative Whip in the House of Lords and become an independent, unaffiliated peer.

Statement to Parliament: Armed Forces' Pay Review Body Appointments

The Secretary of State for Defence (Rt Hon. Gavin Williamson CBE MP): I am pleased to announce that the Prime Minister has invited Mr John Steele to continue to serve as Chair of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body for a further two-month term of office, commencing on 1 March 2018. This allows Mr Steele to draw Pay Round 18 to a conclusion.

I would also like to take this opportunity to announce that the Prime Minister has appointed Mr Peter Maddison as the next Chair of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body. His appointment will commence on 1 March 2018 and run until 28 February 2021.

Both the extension and the appointment have been conducted in accordance with the guidance of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

[News story: All offices closed](#)

Updated: Updated to include press contact details.

Due to the bad weather, all our offices are closed on Thursday 1 March and Friday 2 March 2018.

All our online services are available to [search](#) and [file your documents](#).

You won't be able to use any 'same day' services during this time.

The contact centre is closed, and we won't be able to answer any phone calls or emails.

All press queries must be sent to press@companieshouse.gov.uk.

Sorry for the inconvenience.

[News story: Christine Middlemiss begins as UK Chief Veterinary Officer](#)

Christine Middlemiss [has today](#) taken up post as UK Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) taking over from Nigel Gibbens who has stepped down after 10 successful years in the role.

[Watch Christine's message on her first day at Defra](#)

Christine has a wealth of experience and joins Defra after serving as the CVO for New South Wales, Australia. She took up that role in August 2016 and during her tenure she led major improvements to biosecurity across many farming sectors including implementation of new outcome focused and risk based biosecurity legislation; online animal certification processes and improving evidence and risk based disease control approaches.

She comes from a farming family in the south of Scotland, with a background in beef cattle and sheep. Prior to moving to Australia Christine was an experienced veterinarian who worked for a number of years in private practice in Scotland and the north of England with specific interest in research, meat processing and livestock genetics. She then joined the Animal Health agency (now part of the Animal and Plant Health Agency) in 2008 as a Divisional Veterinary Manager in Scotland. She also led Defra's Animal Traceability and Public Health policy team detecting and responding to new and emerging diseases such as Schmallenberg and Porcine Epidemic Diarrhoea.

She re-joins the department at a time when animal welfare is a top priority for the Government, demonstrated by a number of recent announcements including legislation making CCTV cameras mandatory in slaughterhouses, the call for evidence on a ban on third party puppy sales and the draft animal welfare bill. The Government is also committed to the very highest standards on animal welfare. As the prime Minister has set out, we will make the United Kingdom a world leader in the care and protection of animals as we leave the EU.

Speaking about her appointment, Christine Middlemiss said:

I am delighted to have been appointed. It is a privilege to take over from Nigel and lead my veterinary colleagues to support our farming and food industry on the UK reputation for high health and welfare of our animals.

I am very much looking forward to working again with the team at Defra, its agencies, the devolved administrations and all the individuals and groups who will contribute to meet future challenges.

Our Secretary of State has confirmed he wants to cement the UK's place as a world-leader on animal health and welfare as the UK leaves the European Union, and I'm delighted to have an opportunity to play a part in that.